Aristasia Treasure Trove

Angela Brazil Wednesday, Jul 11 2007

Aristasian Society and Culture and Aristasiansaristasia9:42 pm

Miss Beaumarsh wrote:

Whilst taking a gentle stroll in Elektraspace, I found references to several of Miss Angela Brazil's wonderful school novels — with examples of their lovely covers. I hope to share more of them with you in due course, but I thought I'd start with this one, as I have an older sister of the same name, who was born, and lives in Vintesse. Pip Pip, Kitty I hope you enjoy this!

Unfortunately these marvelous stories have been out of print for quite some time, but one can occasionally find up-to-date, second-hand copies in the right shops, and also in Elektraspace- but it is worth looking around to note variations in prices, as some naughty booksellers have them at jolly unreasonable prices. Quelle swindle!

Anyway I'm sounding quite brunette with all this talk of bargaining! I'll leave you blondes to admire the pretty cover illustration!

Later:

I thought I'd add another jolly book cover, dedicated to my younger sister Eve this time! Any of you Avendale pupils (or Mistresses!) who have had the good fortune to meet this delightful young lady (cough cough!) may see why it is appropriate! I must explain, she is a rather lively, robust brunette whom I have had some difficulty in disciplining. Perhaps I should send her back to Avendale to become reaccquainted with the venerable Misses Serelique and Wardelle.

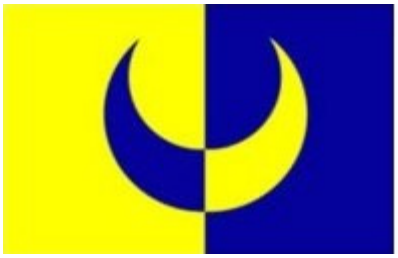
Miss Gillian commented:

Up-to-date schoolgirl books are in some ways as near to paradisial as Telluria gets. They present an all -female world, and especially in the gentler ones (like those of Miss Angela Brazil), a very sweet, loving world motivated largely by kindness and good will.

Leave a Response »

Duality and Vintesse Sunday, Jul 8 2007

Aristasian Society and Culture and Symbolism for Aristasiansaristasia7:36 pm



Vintesse is the Aristasian province asssociated with jinky music, Art Neo and "Pippsies" (bright young things). Its tutelary spirit is Sai Candre, the angel of the moon.

The flag of Vintesse has a horizontally divided field, half yellow, half blue. The charge is a lunar crescent with the points upward in the colours of the field counterchanged.

The themes of this flag are clearly lunarity and duality. We have an image of the sublunary world where all things are in a state of flux and change and where things are seen with the two eyes of lunar reason rather than the single eye of Solar Intellect; thus all is divided into dark and light, yin and yang, *meli* and *chela* ("brunette" and "blonde" sexes).

In her highest aspect, Sai Candrë, the Moon is called the Great Priestess and is the ruler of earthly priestesses and the type of Our Lady as Priestess of the World; for the Moon stands between earth and Heaven, mediating Heaven to earth and Earth to Heaven. This is precisely the function shown in this image, with the Moon appearing suffused with Heaven's golden light on the field of earth and with earth's darkness on the field of Heaven. She is the Mediatrix who stands between Dea and maid, being both Dea and maid. She is the Bridge Who leads from earth to Heaven, and the Barque of Swift Crossing (the resemblance of the horned moon to a boat is another minor aspect of its symbolism).

Thus the flag of Vintesse speaks both of the inherent duality of the world and the resolution of that duality by the mediated Light of Heaven.

Stylistically, the counterchanged image, with its perfect line and curves, represents the quintessence of Art Neo — Vintesse being the home of Art Neo *par excellence* — but counterchanging is also a very traditional heraldic technique, reminding us once again that true Art Neo is simply the application of traditional form within a new *milieu*. Once again, the resolution of duality — in this case of the apparent duality between the "modern" and the traditional — forms the theme of the Vintesse flag; just as this very resolution is the whole purpose of Westrenne Aristasia in general and of Vintesse in particular.

From *The Nine Flags of Aristasia*

Leave a Response »

Once upon a Time Monday, Jun 25 2007

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia7:27 pm

Miss Victoria Mayhew commented:
Here in Vintesse, as in all Aristasia Pura, we do constantly strive for the higher realm. I think here we are closer to the realm of the Idea – logos, if

some of the ladies here prefer that term – than the inhabitants of Telluria are. Having lived for a little while in Telluria
with my cousin Sarah, I cannot help but make that observation. However, I fear that we fortunate maids of Aristasia are still trapped in the cave, watching shadows dance on the wall.

In the Golden Age, we were in the realm of the Ideal, were we not? Then came the Silver Age of Heroines; what we might think of as "once upon a time." Some parts of the Far East are surely still thus, although I have never travelled that far and know of no maids from those reaches. My theory is that Aristasia Pura corresponds to the Age of Bronze, when things are still sound although not quite heroic…but Telluria is in the Age of Lead, and is fundamentally shaky and corrupt, in much need of a cleansing and a tearing down for rebuilding. The Wheel turns; all things pass, even the horrors of the Pit.

Miss Alice Trent answered:
Thank you, Miss Mayhew, for your very pertinent comments – as you suggest, phrases like "once upon a time" indicate that a story (normally a traditional fairy tale) is set in "that time", or "nowever" – in the time that transcends time, but which also may for us be represented by earlier and purer Ages.

Aristasia's Iron Age is no doubt nearer to the Bronze Age in Telluria, though such things as the development of individualism indicate that it is indeed an Iron Age. Maids in the East do have a mentality closer to that of earlier Ages and are less affected by the changes of the Iron Age which are most typified in the West, which, being the Land of the Setting Sun, will always tend to come into its own in the last Age.

Where Eastern people accept the sovereignty of the West, it is not because they believe that the ways of the West are inherently superior, but because they acknowledge that the time of the West has come and that its sovereignty is a symbolic necessity for this age – a concession more easily granted since the West in Aristasia makes no attempt to interfere with the ways of the East.

Leave a Response »

Good Fences, Good Neighbors Thursday, Jun 21 2007

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia8:53 pm

Miss Amy recommends Kadoria:
The other day, after a full morning, I enjoyed the simple luxury of reading a real magazine from Kadoria (or rather, the Tellurian Kadoria, the 1940s). If you've never had the pleasure of reading a real magazine, I would strongly encourage you
to make this effort. For in real magazines, one finds affirmation of goodness, order, beauty, and truth, affirmation and acceptance of these things as normal, and as virtues one should aspire to. After

copying down a recipe or two and noting the latest in fashions and hairstyles, I read a touching letter to the editor. A reader had written to discuss how good fences make good neighbors: because it is over a fence that a borrowed cup of sugar passes, and it is over a fence that two friends talk about Little Suzie's latest violin recital or how best to soothe the new baby's colic. And it is over a fence that appreciative comments are made on each other's gardens, and hints are shared about how to economize and make a comfortable home on a family's limited income. If you have a deep longing for real neighbors, just as I do, I invite you to move to Kadoria and buy a little tract home right next to the one we are going to purchase. There is a perfect white picket fence that separates our houses. You can comment on my tulips just about to bloom, and I'll compliment your lovely jonquils. When the little ones are asleep, we'll chat about everything imaginable: how to keep our homes in spit-spot shape the most efficient way possible (have you heard about that astonishing machine that actually washes dishes!), and how to cope with the occasional tantrums of those toddlers we each have. Here, where we will live, in a loving neighborhood that respects goodness and honesty and cleanliness, life is quite lovely; quite lovely indeed. And remember, new neighbor of mine, that a well-run home does not end at the front and back doors; it shines in the face of the clean, well-mannered child living therein, and it blossoms in the heart of that Brunette Mummy, eager to return to the sanctuary of her home after working so hard at the office.

Leave a Response »

Matriarchy, Patriarchy and Femininity Friday, Jun 1 2007

Aristasian Society and Culture and Femininity and Aristasiaaristasia3:23 pm

A typical comment of the modern mind upon 'matriarchy' is to say that it must only have been patriarchy the other way round, But such is very far from being the case… Femininity has very definite characteristics that are a part of the metaphysical nature of things. To say, for example, that if men are considered the active, forceful, even violent sex under patriarchy, women must have been considered the same way under matriarchy, is founded on a complete misunderstanding of the nature of femininity, both in its metaphysical essence and in its biological reflection on earth.

In a 'matriarchal' or we had rather say, a feminine society, women as the leading and most revered sex, are revered precisely for their feminine qualities, which do not change whether in feminine or masculine societies. They are always the 'passive' sex in the sense of being the one less oriented to outward activity, and in this, in feminine societies, they are assimilated to the Principle itself, which causes motion without itself moving. This is not to say that women did nothing, either in feminine or patriarchal societies, but that symbolically the qualities of serenity, peace and contemplation are considered superior to dynamic outward activity, Or rather, the latter is said to depend upon and be always subordinate to the former.

This, indeed, is understood even in patriarchal societies, where, for example, in the Hindu Tantrik tradition the male principle (the god or deva) is considered to be the superior and therefore the serene, unmoving principle, while his female counterpart (or shakti) is his outward activity or energy. This is rather curious according to most later patriarchal thinking about the nature of femininity, just as it was to matriarchal thinking. But the reversal was necessary in order to preserve metaphysical truth

and patriarchal doctrine at the same time. In Tibet, which remains closer to the original matriarchal tradition (polyandry was until recently practised there), the position is reversed — that is to say, normal — and the serene Deity is female while her shakti or outward energy is male. Similarly, in Tibet, in the case of the complementary principles of Wisdom and Method — representing the Essential or Spiritual principle and the substantial or material respectively —Wisdom is female and Method male.

The Hindu Tantrik tradition notwithstanding, in general patriarchy has not attempted to alter the relative qualities of masculinity and femininity. Rather it has re-valued them in metaphysical terms, associating feminine serenity with the passivity of matter and male activity with the relatively 'active' power of the in-forming Spirit or Essence. And, insofar as patriarchy is a legitimate tradition, albeit one belonging purely to the inferior state of the Iron Age, this can be accepted as one of the permissible permutations of the expression of Truth.

Nonetheless, throughout the patriarchal period, the feminine continually shines through in its true glory, despite all ideological opposition. From the great Goddesses of various traditions, who so often overwhelm their appointed Gods in the hearts and souls of the people, to the Blessed Virgin Mary who rapidly adopts the titles of supreme Deity — Seat of Wisdom, Rose of the World, Queen of Heaven.

From The Feminine Universe

Leave a Response »

History and Myth Monday, May 28 2007

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia3:13 pm

A question arose about "mythic history", those people and events in a country's history which take on a mythic significance, in particular the storms which prevented the Spanish Armada's attack on Britain, and the Divine Wind which scattered the enemies of Japan. Aristasia's mythic history also turns on the repulsion of an invader by Divine intervention – in our case the defeat of the Outlander by the Sun-Daughter Sai Rayanna.

Lhi Raya Chancandre Aquitaine commented:

The distinction between "myth" and "history" is a very recent one. It really only became fully formed during the 19th century.

The modern "historical consciousness" takes as its axiom that history is a set of "brute facts" that simply "happened": any attempt of ours to read a hugher or spiritual meaning into them is merely a product of ignorance and superstition.

The traditional consciousness, on the contrary has always valued history for what it *means*. In particular the history of a nation or a people is its validating "story".

The underlying point at issue is: do things happen at random or is there a meaning or pattern underlying them? The modern "scientistic" approach is committed to the hypothesis of randomness. The rest of humanity has always believed that events have meaning and are the outworking of eternal themes in the medium of time.

The modern practice of "debunking" traditional mythic-history in the light of supposed "superior knowledge" which is often purely hypothetical or based on circular arguments ("this history is untrue because it postulates miracles and we know miracles don't happen" – which simply means "they believe in miracles, we don't; and we know they are wrong because we know we are right") is simply an attack by the "accidentalist" school upon traditional thought. Such attacks often shows great ferocity and emotionalism because their perpetrators are often very deeply and ideologically opposed to a universe with meaning and symbolism.

Aristasians, like all traditional people, draw no distinction between "mythic history" and "factual history" since historical events are merely the outworking of eternal themes in time. If the telling of the story sometimes errs on the side of conveying the fundamental meaning at the expense of the brute fact, that is because the underlying meaning is the more *important* truth about history. The raw facts are relatively unimportant.

One might even say that, in an imperfect world, the facts may sometimes be inaccurate about the truths they are intended to manifest. In such cases it may be our duty to correct them.

One Response »

Racinated Creativity Thursday, May 24 2007

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia4:12 pm

The Pit is a deracinated society. Anyone living in or near it should have a handy stock of antidotes:

Miss Gladys contributed:

Here is my Pit-antidote and it never fails to work. Baking!! I have a small collection of very up-to-date recipes, although any will do to be honest! I put my rather Quirrie-esque pinnie on, take out my scales (with Imperial weights, none of these rather odd metric measures) and away I go. My kitchen activities are often accompanied by up-to-date music, and sometimes my rather tubby kitchen cat will sit and watch me.

At the end of half an hour or more (depending on the cake) I am thoroughly racinated and have a lovely cake to eat with a perfect cup of tea. What could be more perfect?

Miss Iris added:

Just guess what I got through the Iron Curtain last week: a book of Trentish embroidery patterns! It's beautiful, with colour plates and detailed instructions. Now I'm working hard to finish my other pieces so I can start on one or two from my new book.

Miss B sighed:

Trentish embroidery patterns you say? How lovely they must be! I have a collection of knitting patterns from Quirinelle that I take out and admire from time to time, but I fear I am too clumsy to make anything of.

Miss Gladys, I agree with you that baking is wonderfully racinating. Cake is as far beyond this clumsy brunette as are delicate Trentish embroidery and Quirinelle knitting however.

Miss Iris insisted:

Ah, Miss B. – you must not think that you are too clumsy to make anything. It is very naughty of you! Every pette can create something, whether she is skilled in a particular domestic art such as knitting, gardening or baking or in more general things. And you have 'made' me feel most welcome, so perhaps your skill in creating is in creating a welcoming environment. That is every bit as important as doing fine work with one's hands, and possibly more suited to a dashing brunette. What a thing it is to create a civilised atmosphere! I salute you.

I am firmly of the opinion that a lot of the problems with bongos are caused by the fact that they do not create, they only consume. Because they do not create, they see no value in permanence and beauty and effort, and praise only the instant and novel. In a sort of vicious circle, because they have been taught impatience and dissatisfaction, they then refuse to spend time on making things of value! They simply purchase an endless succession of cheap, ugly "novelties", disposing of the things that had caught their eyes (but not their minds or hearts) a moment earlier. It is foolish, rootless and wasteful.

This is a subject I am passionate about. Every egg a pette cracks, every stitch she makes, every flower she places in a vase is of utmost importance. Better that a maid should produce a line of wonky stitching or the world's worst scones (produced, nonetheless, with time and love) than that she should become a rank-and-file consumer.

Miss B agreed:

Miss Iris, if all I ever did in this world was make you welcome, I would feel content. Such a wise blonde as you are ought to be made feel how welcome are her words, as well as her lovely self, wheresoever she chooses to favor the brunettes with them.

I am most grateful for your salute to my humble part in creating the civilized atmosphere which prevails here. It is perfect for civilized discussion with the lightest spice of – I do not want to say dissent, or disagreement, because never would I dissent or disagree with a blonde. Perhaps I shall say the spice of differing perspective.

It is true that the vast majority of bongos spend their sad lives as consumers of the things of which in a sane society they would have a share in the production. However, if all bongos were so, Telluria might look forward to a much swifter return to sanity. The images and noises of the Pit do not arise of themselves. Intelligent and educated bongos are paid quite a lot of money to produce the trash that

assaults our precious sensibilities whenever we must venture into the Pit. Bongos of the most powerful class choose to create art of destruction and sickness, and choose to broadcast it to the great world.

As you say, "Every egg a pette cracks, every stitch she makes, every flower she places in a vase is of utmost importance." It is so that the forces of light will triumph over the forces of darkness – but not only because of the stitches made, eggs cracked, and flowers placed to beautify the Hestia, but also because of the ugliness not made, the chaos not succumbed to. When we use our Dea-given powers in the service of light we do not use them in the service of darkness. We choose to create beauty and order and light and love.

And as I write, I am eating wonderful lemon bread you inspired me to make! I wish I could share it with all who read these (overly serious!) words.

Leave a Response »

The Origin of War Thursday, May 17 2007

Aristasian Society and Culture and Metaphysics, Philosophy and Science: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia11:03 am

In the beginning there was no war, for all things were one in Dea, and conflict could not arise. The descent into manifestation is inevitably, in one sense, a descent into war: that is, the primordial Unity of unmanifest Wholeness is broken, and conflict enters into the now-manifest cosmos.

Nonetheless, it is true to say that physical war was unknown until a very late stage in human history. War between maid and maid was quite alien to the vast majority of "matriarchal" human civilisations, as it is in Aristasia. In the first Golden Age, war raged continually, but it was waged directly against the forces of darkness on the psychic and spiritual levels. This is the authentic archetype of war — the Vikhail, or true Holy War; and from this all the glory and nobility later associated with physical battle derives. It is still fought by every contemplative and mystic.

As time wore on and the descent into matter continued, the Enemy began to take on physical or quasi-physical forms. So also did the forces of good. It is from this period, many thousands of years ago, that the "mythological" creatures — dragons, centaurs, unicorns, etc. — found in legends throughout the world, have their origin. Later still, the forces of evil began to incarnate themselves in human civilisations — in the decadent "matriarchal" and proto-patriarchal states. It is in this period the Holy War descends fully to the physical level and maid first fights with maid. Finally, in the Kali yuga or Age of Iron, physical war becomes a condition of life. Kali yuga is known as the "age of quarrels" or conflicts. It is also the age when masculine images of Deity first arise and later become dominant over feminine ones.

Increasingly, all remnants of the true Holy War are lost, and war becomes merely a manifestation of the chaos and discord of the Age of Iron. This continual conflict is the inverse parody of the fact that the true soul is constantly at war with the discordant forces within her until she wins through to the primordial peace of Union with God.

From The Symbolism of Archery

One Response »

Ordinators and Hallucinogens Sunday, May 13 2007

Aristasian Society and Culture and Metaphysics, Philosophy and Science: Aristasian Reflectionsaristasia10:39 am

Miss Sushuri Madonna wrote:

I was privileged to have a fascinating discussion last evening with Miss Francesca, who is not an Aristasian but is well versed in The Feminine Universe and knows far more about Aristasia than most Outlanders.

This lady raised the issue of ordinators and of Miss Alice Lucy Trent's contention (in *Universe*) that they are a form of technics that would have come about in a continuing-rajasic world. In other words that technical advance and cultural decay are not related – their coincidence in Telluria is an historical accident.

Against this (and very much in the Aristasian tradition of "testing the hypothesis" or "putting the dark view on the table" – rather than the patriarchal spirit of attacking or scoring points) she suggested that while ordinator *hardware* may be neutral, software, including such fundamental conceptual software as the Graphic User Interface now common to all main ordinator systems, is designed by extreme type-3s and that the GUI itself was designed by people using large amounts of hallucinogens (specifically LSD) in the process.

I find this fascinating. Modern ordinators – although Virtual Reality is in its Infancy – are based on various metaphors which translate the extreme-abstract into the visible, tangible and easily-nameable, in order to make them usable by non-mathematicians.

The GUI itself, although it now seems familiar and obvious (you are using it right now), represented an amazing leap in consciousness. Just watch an older person, unfamiliar with ordinators, struggle to come to grips with it and you will be reminded what a radical conceptual leap was entailed.

So, considering that it *was* designed by post-Eclipse Western Tellurians, it does not surprise one unduly that hallucinogens were used to free the mind from its normal constraints and cart-tracks and think in terms completely new.

The question is, since the use of LSD was so closely bound up with the development of the Eclipse (much of the deformism, love of chaos, attraction to the outrageous and absurd that makes up much of bongo advertising, and "media-culture" can be called post-LSD culture). Are ordinators fundamentally deracinated?

I really don't know the answer, so I have popped it up for your consideration.

One point that immediately occurred to me is that I have heard that Japanese innovators use Zen techniques to clear their minds of preconceptions and "think anew" in ways demanded by the new technics. Of course Zen (largely misunderstood in what might be called "LSD terms") was very popular among precisely the sort of people who were designing graphic user interfaces in the 1970s. Could this be an area where legitimate and illegitimate "newness" meet?

I put forward the question for wiser heads to chew on, if you will forgive the mixed metaphor.

Miss Jannie added:

Not that I think I am the wise head with regard to this subject, which I also find highly interesting.

I only want to direct your attention to an on-line excerpt from John Markoff's *What the Dormouse Said*, where the idea is presented in detail that the break through in the development not only of GUI, but also of the whole idea of 'personal computers' as such, is a result of the antiauthoritarian counter culture of the 60s in general and Doug Engelbart's presentation on December 9 1968 at the Fall Joint Computer Conference in San Francisco in particular.

Lady Aquila replied:

One is reminded of an essay by the Traditionalist Whitall N. Perry entitled "Drug induced Mysticism: The Mescalin Hypothesis". Unfortunately that is long out of print and selling for outlandish sums.

What is of interest is that Aristasians became involved with ordinators from a very early stage – at the very beginning, if not before the true beginning, of the "personal computer revolution", and not only as users but as developers of "games" and limited "virtual worlds".

Some of the very first Aristasians or proto-Aristasians seem to have had mildly Luddite tendencies and a distrust of technics, perhaps because of a strong Arcadian group. Some even considered Kadoria and Quirinelle to be somewhat dubiously "modernist"!

However, not only technics in general, but in particular the idea of spatial metaphors and building spaceless "places", seemed to come very naturally to the generation after the Founding Mothers. Is there something deracinated in this, or something "back to fundamentals"? Perhaps it can be either, depending on how one approaches it. It was sometimes said that early Aristasians were in one sense the *most* deracinated people – the ones who were so utterly alienated from the post-Eclipse world that they had to begin anew.

I rather feel that Virtual Space is an interesting area that has opened up at the very end of this Tellurian Historical Cycle, that it would have opened whether Western culture had collapsed or not, and that in Telluria it can be approached from two opposite positions, represented by the drug-taking culture-wreckers of the furthest-possible West (California) and the traditional, spiritually-influenced Zen consciousness of the furthest-possible East (Japan).

Early Aristasians walked into this territory without drugs (unless you count some very inventive cocktails) and found it to be their own.

Leave a Response »

Friendship in Elektraspace Saturday, May 12 2007

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia9:26 pm

The future of a Virtual Aristasia was being discussed the other day. We were speaking of the huge importance of friendship and sisterhood to Aristasians and the come-and-go nature of many of the friendships formed in Elektraspace.

In Aristasia Pura, the deepest friendships often begin in childhood and are forged through many common experiences and loyalties.

In Aristasia-in-Telluria friendships have been welded by living together and working together.

In Aristasia-in-Elektra friendship can seem a little lightweight, especially with the tendency of some new friends to be effusive one day (or month or year) and gone the next. If Elektra is going to be an important field for Aristasian life, we need to consider how to address this.

Traditionally, friendship develops slowly and runs deep in Aristasia. Building trust, love and bonding does not happen in a day and when truly forged is rarely broken. The term *Friend* is one that some Aristasians use with caution, for Friend is one of the highest titles she can bestow: it is not for mere acquaintances or passers-by.

And yet in Elektraspace, striking up friendships rather suddenly seems almost a necessary procedure, and the concomitant shallow-rootedness seems hard to avoid.

What is the answer? Lhi Raya quoted an old saying that Dea is easy to please but hard to satisfy (meaning that She is pleased with any small gift or expression of love, but that in the end only full devotion is truly sufficient). It is a powerful saying and one which lhi Raya suggests can be applied to Aristasian friendships in Elektra.

We too must be easy to please but hard to satisfy. Ready to be friends quickly; but realising also that the true bonds of deep friendship must be forged with time and effort and love; and that there is no substitute for this.

Playing together is an important aspect of this. The Japanese are very aware that spending recreational time together is one of the few ways of speeding up the long process of forming true friendship. That is one reason why I think the Wii, with its promise of easy recreational interaction across continents, may be important for the next phase of Aristasian development.

We also need to be working on projects together. Making a film in Virtualia is one thing that has been discussed. Sharing our fiction is something that is already beginning.

Gradually we must build toward that critical mass whereat a true *esprit de corps* can develop in Elektra as it has in Physicalia.

In Telluria friendship may be an optional extra. In Aristasia it is the cement that keeps the temple erect: the gravitational pull that holds the stars within their courses.

Leave a Response »

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